

Letter Home Writing Assignment

Tomorrow is the big day! Your Rover is landing on Mars at 15:00 hours. You are away from home at Mission Control in Pasadena, California. You are very excited, and cannot sleep. You decide to write a letter home describing your mission. Your letter should explain what your team has done to prepare for the mission, what the team will be doing once the Rover lands on Mars, and why your team is sending a Rover to Mars. You should also write about what role you will play, and why your role is important to your team.

Letter Home Scoring Rubric

(Adapted from Maryland Functional Writing Test)

SCORE POINT 1:

- The response provides sufficient evidence that the writer saw the prompt and attempted to respond to it. The response lacks development and has insufficient information to complete the writing task. The little information included may be confusing or not relevant to the topic, resulting in a lack of clarity.
- The response lacks sufficient details to explain the topic, and the details present are often vague.
- An organizational plan, if established, is not maintained.
- The writer may not address the intended audience.
- Errors in sentence formation interfere with meaning and confuse the reader.
- Errors in spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization interfere with meaning and confuse the reader.

SCORE POINT 2:

- The response contains little development and has a minimal amount of information to complete the writing task. The information included does not clearly explain the topic, and irrelevant information interferes with clarity.
- The response may have details, but the details may be too general or may not adequately explain the topic.
- An organizational plan is established and minimally maintained.
- The writer addresses the intended audience.
- Errors in sentence formation, if present, may interfere with meaning.
- Errors in spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization may interfere with meaning.

SCORE POINT 3:

- The response is adequately developed and has enough information to complete the writing task. The information is presented clearly, and irrelevant information does not interfere with clarity.
- The response contains some specific details that adequately explain the topic, although some details may not contribute to the development of the explanation.
- An organizational plan is established and generally maintained.
- The writer addresses the intended audience.
- Errors in sentence formation, if present, do not interfere with meaning.
- Errors in spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization, if present, do not interfere with meaning.

SCORE POINT 4:

- The response is well developed and has enough or more than enough information to complete the writing task. The information is presented clearly through specific details.
- The response contains specific details that more than adequately explain the topic.
- The organizational plan is established and consistently maintained, with minor, if any, lapses.
- The writer addresses the intended audience.
- Errors in sentence formation, if present, do not interfere with meaning.
- Errors in spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization, if present, do not interfere with meaning.
- Some "4" papers may well go beyond these characteristics.